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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted at Mississippi State University to assess differences in the academic achievement of two matched groups of two-year college transfer students. One group (N=30) had attended a junior college which followed a traditional semester time table of 15 to 18 weeks, while the other group (N=30) had attended a junior college with a modular schedule under which students attended the same class each day. Academic achievement was defined as post-transfer quality (grade) point average and degree attainment. The study found no significant difference in the quality (grade) point averages or graduation rates of the semester scheduled and modular scheduled groups. (UCM)

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THE RELATIONSHIP OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT TO MODULAR AND SEMESTER SCHEDULING

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to determine whether or not differences in academic achievement existed after transfer to a senior college between two groups of college transfer students when one group received junior college instruction on the semester schedule and the other one on the modular schedule. Academic achievement was defined as: (1) the quality point average earned after transfer to a senior college, and (2) the number of students who completed degree programs after transfer to a senior college.

The subjects were thirty matched pairs of students. One-half of them had attended a semester schedule junior college and one-half had attended a modular schedule junior college.

Hypothesis 1 was concerned with the quality point average earned after transfer to a senior college by those students who attended a junior college on the semester schedule as compared with those students who attended a junior college on the modular schedule. When the quality point average earned by the semester scheduled group was compared with the quality point average of the modular group, no significant differences seemed to exist between these groups. Hypothesis 2 was focused on a comparison of the number of students who graduated after transfer to a senior college when the semester group was compared to the modular group. When the number who completed graduation in the two

groups were compared, no significant differences appeared to exist between them.

It appeared that neither the semester nor the modular schedule were significantly related to: (1) a student's academic achievement as measured by the quality point average earned after transfer to a senior college, and (2) the number of students who completed degree programs after transfer to a senior college. This study tended to support related studies. A student's earned quality point average after transfer tends to be closely related to the earned quality point average at the junior college. Academic achievement at a junior college, without regard to semester or modular schedule, seems to predict academic achievement at a senior college.

Introduction

A concern of counselors and academic advisors has been to assist students in making a successful transition from high school to college. Attending a junior college was a transition for many students. Traditionally, the junior college schedule followed a semester time table of 15-18 weeks. With a national emphasis on reform in education, alternative approaches to traditional education were being considered. Perhaps a schedule where students attend the same class each day, as they do in high school, would promote a more successful transition from high school to senior college. Was there a difference in senior college achievement between students who complete courses in brief, concentrated periods of study and students who complete courses in longer, less concentrated periods of study? This study was an attempt to compare the academic results of daily attendance of the same subject matter (modular schedule) with that of the more traditional three hours of attendance each week (semester schedule).

Statement of the Problem

This study was designed to determine whether or not differences in academic achievement existed after transfer to a senior college between two groups of college transfer students when one group received junior college instruction on the semester schedule and the other on the modular schedule. Academic achievement was defined as: (1) the quality point average earned after transfer to a senior college, and (2) the number of students who completed degree programs after transfer to a senior college.

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis were the primary focus of this study.

1. There will be no significant differences between the quality point average earned after transfer to a senior college by those students who attended a junior college on the semester schedule as compared with those students who attended a junior college on the modular schedule.

2. There will be no significant differences between the number of students who graduated after transfer to a senior college when the semester scheduled junior college group was compared to the modular junior college group.

Subjects of the Study

The subjects were thirty matched pairs of students according to: ACT composite score, academic major, age, date of enrollment in the junior college, and gender. Thirty of the subjects attended a junior college with a semester schedule and thirty of them attended a junior college with a modular schedule.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This study was designed to determine whether or not differences in academic achievement existed after transfer to a senior college between two groups of college transfer students when one group received junior college instruction on the semester schedule and the other on the modular schedule. Academic achievement was defined as: (1) the quality point average earned after transfer to a senior college, and (2) the number of students who completed degree programs after transfer to a senior college.

The data were analyzed and interpreted in terms of the following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1

There will be no significant differences between the quality point average earned after transfer to a senior college by those students who attended a junior college on the semester schedule as compared with those students who attended a junior college on the modular schedule.

In order to determine if a significant difference existed between the two groups (semester and modular), a *t* test for mean differences was computed. Results of the analysis are shown in Table 1. Since a *t* value of -.56 ($p>.05$) was found, Hypothesis 1 was not rejected.

Table 1

A Comparison of Grade Point Averages for Modular and Semester Schedules

Group	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*df*	*t*
Modular	30	2.74	.61	58	-.56
Semester	30	2.82	.48		

$p > .05$

Hypothesis 2

There will be no significant differences between the number of students who graduated after transfer to a senior college when the semester scheduled junior college group was compared to the modular scheduled junior college group.

In order to determine if a significant difference existed between the two groups (semester and modular) in the number of students who graduated after transfer to a senior college, the chi square (X^2) test of significance was utilized. Results of the statistical analysis of the hypothesis are shown in Table 2. With $x^2(1) = .1967$,

$p > .05$, hypothesis was not rejected.

Table 2

A comparison of Graduates and Non-graduates from Modular and Semester Schedules

	Numbers			
Group	Graduates	Non-Graduates	df	X^2
Modular	24	6	1	.1967
Semester	25	5		

$p > .05$

In summary, neither the semester nor the modular schedule appeared significantly related to: (1) a student's academic acheivement as measured by the quality point average earned after transfer to a senior college, and (2) the number of students who completed degree programs after transfer to a senior college. This study tended to support related studies. A students earned quality point average after transfer tends to be closely related to the earned quality point average at the junior college. Academic achievement at a junior college, without regard to semester or modular schedule, seems to predict academic achievement at a senior college.

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